

in Cobler THE
WITCH of the Woodlands
OR, THE *1079-124*
22
COBLER's New Translation.

Here Robin the Cobler for his former Evils,
Is punish'd bad as Faustus with his Devils,



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Witch of the Woodlands.

C H A P. I.

Robin's Place of Abode, and his amorous Transactions:
he is married to a Wench, with his painful Lamentation.

I N the Weilds of Kent, not far from Romney Marsh, there dwelt an old merry conceited Cobler, commonly called Robin the Devil, who afterwards was called the Witch of the Woodlands.

This Cöbler always took special care to please his customers, but particularly he would be sure, if any comely wench had any thing to do, he would be sure to go through stitch with her work first of all.

He would be merry in all company, and sing in his shop like a nightingale. He would caper like a Jack-Pudding, and was not inferior to Lusty Lawrence, who got eighteen wenches with child in one year.

But as the proverb says, The Pitcher which goes often to the Well, may come home broke at last; and sweet meat will have sower sauce. So it fared with Robin the Cöbler, for one of the Wenches being suddenly brought to-bed with a fine male child, the damsel's mother served him with a warrant, and made him marry her daughter. Then was poor Robin in a peck of troubles, and could not tell what to do, for though he was a stout follower of Mars, yet he was not made a Vulcan till that time; and now he must find milk, candles, soap, a nurse, &c. but as the proverb says, That one ill chance generally followeth another, so it was with him, for two other damsels that he had formerly made use of, began to make use of him, and brought him two children to keep that were both born in one day; which when he beheld he fell into such a quandary, that the people that beheld him said, he looked exceedingly pitiful on the matter, that they thought in their minds that he would never be good any more.

Then began with doleful words and wringing hands to bewail his former follies, saying, I wish that my father had never begot me, then I should not have got so many girls with child, or else I wish some honest sow-gelder had done his office; then I had escaped the misery I am now certain to endure! Oh, silly man that I am, was it no sufficient for me to sing and duncce, and drink all day and my merry with the girls, but that I must over-run all in the way: now I am in a worse case than Porrag John, Marriot the Lawyer, or even the Pinder of Wakefield.

Whils he was making this lamentation, a companion of his whispered him in the ear, and bid him gone, saying. One light pair of heels is worth two pair of hands. He took council, and went off as you may find in the next chapter.



C H A P. II.

Robin runs away, and the Entertainment he found on the Road.

ROBIN the Cocker taking this advice, made no more ado, but trussed up his heels to be gone, resolving to go to London, and there work-till such time as his children were men, and able to work for themselves. But as he travelled through the Wields of Kent, he lost his way in the Woodlands, and night being at hand, and finding none to guide him, he wandered up and down till ten o'clock in a cold, dark, frosty night, but, at last, he heard a cock crow, and being somewhat



and put me to much pain. nevertheless they gave me something to feed on at night, though it was but bran and water. When I was a Fox, though the Witches in the shape of dogs ran after me, and bit me sorely by the buttocks yet I had something to eat; but now I am hunger bitten, which is ten times worse. When I was an owl I was most shamefully used, but now I am a wondering stock unto all the folks that see me, insomuch that neither man nor woman, will look at me because of the poverty of my flesh, and the disguise of my wretched habit. O what a sad deplorable creature am I.—O that poor Robin the Cobler, like Diogenes' mare, could



feed upon brambles and coarse thistles; or like the Camelian, feed upon air.

C H A P. V.

Robin meets an old Blind Beggar.

NOW, whilst he was thus complaining, comes by a blind beggar-man, having a very large wallet,



full of the fragments of meat, with good bread and cheese that had been given him among his generous benefactors: upon which, as soon as the other had fixed his eyes on the old man's wallet, he was extremely glad, and his heart jumped for Joy, as hoping he should now fill his

belly once again. And so taking courage, he addressed the old man, being well assured he could not see him.— Well overtaken, father, how far walk you this way?— Marry, quoth the Beggar, but to the next village, and through the want of a guide, I am afraid that I shall come very late to my home.—Why, says the Cobler, I will lead you myself, for I love old men with all my heart.



C H A P. VI.

Robin lives with a Beggar, who dies and leaves him all his Money. Robin goes Home, and what Use he makes of his good Fortune.

AS Robin the Cobler was leading the blind man, the old gentleman found him extremely diligent, and doubly circumspect, and thereupon desired to know who he might be, that would undervalue himself so much, as to take the pains to lead him?—Then, said Robin, I am a gentleman born, and that you would say, God help you, if you could see me; but at present it has so happened, that I have not one penny to help myself; because, I having been a valiant Cavalier for the King, and



and by the same misfortunes of the late civil wars, am now utterly undone for ever, unless some sudden help speedily comes by Divine Providence.—I have kept fast, and as

of two days and two nights, and not so much as one poor morsel of bread has come within my hungry body.— Alas! good Sir, said the beggar, I lament your case very much: and if you will be pleased to accept of such homely cheer as I have, you are heartily welcome to it: and at the next alehouse we come to, I will give you some liquor of the best to drive it down; whereupon the wallet was laid on the ground, and the victuals spread out on a green bank. I dare say there was no occasion to force Robin to eat; but when he had filled his belly, away they both went to the place appointed, and there lay loving for that night together.



The next day the beggar took him to his own house, where was the greatest plenty of very good cloaths, both woollen and linen, with which the beggar suited Robin. He then shewed him an old chest, in which there were two hundred and fifty odd pounds, all in ready money.

All this, said the beggar, shall be your own when I die you will but stay with me all my life time.—Whereupon the Cöbler replied, With hearty good will, Sir.—The bargain being thus made, Robin and his old master used to walk about to good mens houses, to see what victuals they could get, till at last Robin became full cunning as his old master, and was as well acquainted with the master beggars in Kent.

But to conclude, in process of time the old beggar died, and then his estate became Robin's, who, after he had nobly interred his old master, went home to his fa-



ther habitation, and gave orders for his bringing up three children, which he begat in one night, and gave the two wenches ten pounds each for the injury he had done; threw the rest of his money into his wife's lap.

F I N I S.



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